



## **COUNTY GOVERNMENT SURVEY COUNTY OVERVIEW SECTION**

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### **PLEASE REFER QUESTIONS TO:**

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## COUNTY OVERVIEW

This section is designed to obtain basic structural information about your county. The facts requested are used to provide background information, and not used for evaluation.

### BACKGROUND TO THE GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE PROJECT

Since 1996, under the auspices of The Pew Charitable Trusts, the Maxwell School of Citizenship & Public Affairs at Syracuse University, in partnership with *Governing* magazine, has rated the management performance of local and state governments and selected federal agencies in the United States. The project, called the Government Performance Project (GPP), is administered by the Maxwell School's Alan K. Campbell Public Affairs Institute.

The project aims to improve the understanding and practice of government management throughout the United States on the city, county, state, and federal levels. It evaluates the effectiveness of management systems by considering government performance in five categories: financial management, human resource management, information technology, capital management, and managing for results. Each category is addressed by a separate section in this survey. For each category, governments are evaluated based on this survey, interviews, and an analysis of published documents.

While the project highlights overall management capacity, it focuses on the role of leadership, the integration of the five categories, as well as the communication of government performance issues to the citizenry.

In 1998 the project studied and rated government performance of the 50 states and 15 federal agencies. The results were published in the February 1999 issues of *Governing* and *Government Executive*. The results were also widely reported by leading print, radio, and television media.

In 1999 the project evaluated government performance in the top 35 U.S. cities by revenue and of five federal agencies. These results were published in the February 2000 issue of *Governing* and the March 2000 issue of *Government Executive*.

In 2000 the GPP reevaluated the 50 states and the results were published in the February 2001 issue of *Governing*. This year the GPP will evaluate 40 county governments.

The Maxwell School will add the data collected to its clearinghouse of information and continue to expand this resource of government management practices. Ultimately, government entities will have the opportunity to learn from one another and exchange valuable information through the efforts of this project.

### GPP CONTACT PERSON

For more information on the GPP, please visit our website at: [www.maxwell.syr.edu/gpp](http://www.maxwell.syr.edu/gpp). If you have any questions regarding this survey or the GPP in general, please direct your inquiries to Anthony Stacy, at [gpp@maxwell.syr.edu](mailto:gpp@maxwell.syr.edu) or 315-443-9707.

## **DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED IN THIS SURVEY:**

*Department:* Any administrative subdivision or unit of government (also in some cases called a board, bureau, commission, department, etc.) having the primary purpose of executing some governmental functions or laws. In this survey, “department” is meant to convey a unit that reports directly to the Mayor or Chief Executive Officer.

*Executive or Administrative authority:* Power to administer local, state, and federal policies, appoint county employees, and supervise program implementation.

*Legislative authority:* Power to enact ordinances, levy certain taxes, and adopt budgets.

*Legislative body:* Term used to describe a county’s popularly elected governing board vested with legislative authority over the county. May be referred to as the board of supervisors, county commission, council, or legislature. Some boards or commissions may also be vested with executive or administrative authority.

## **INSTRUCTIONS FOR FILLING OUT THE SURVEY ELECTRONICALLY:**

This document is a Microsoft Word form. A form is a structured document with spaces reserved for entering information. This survey, containing check-boxes and fill-ins, can be viewed and completed in Word.

- *To check a box:* Use your mouse to move the arrow over the box you want to check and click once. To uncheck the box, click again.
- *To enter text in a fill-in box:* Move your mouse over the gray box. The arrow will change to a cursor. Click once to highlight the box. Begin typing. All fill-ins have unlimited capacity.

To enable electronic completion, the file has been password protected. Text can only be written in fill-in boxes. To provide comments on a question, include a separate page of comments with reference to the question number.

If you encounter difficulties completing the survey electronically, you may contact the project manager at (315) 443-9707 for troubleshooting assistance. The document can also be printed and filled in manually.

**PLEASE SUBMIT THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENT WITH THE SURVEY:**

***(Note: If this document is available online, you may simply identify the URL at which it may be found.)***

☒ A copy of the organizational chart for the entire county **Maricopa County's dynamic constellation organization chart is attached. A traditional "box and lines" chart is also included for reference.**

**PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS ABOUT THE STRUCTURE OF YOUR COUNTY:**

1. What major functions does your county perform?

- ☒ Education
- ☐ Public welfare (income maintenance programs)
- ☒ Hospital management
- ☒ Public health services (outpatient care, other than hospital care, including: research and education, clinics, nursing, environmental health protection, animal control, etc.)
- ☒ Housing (projects, assistance, construction, etc.)
- ☒ Economic development/job training
- ☒ Road construction and maintenance (highways, streets, bridges, tunnels, ferries, turnpikes, street lighting, parking facilities, snow/ice removal, etc.)
- ☐ Transit system construction, maintenance, and operation (bus, commuter rail, light rail, subway, etc.)
- ☐ Airport construction, maintenance, and operation
- ☐ Water transport and terminal construction, maintenance and operation (canals, ports, harbors, docks, etc.)
- ☒ Police protection (including traffic safety)
- ☒ Correction (jails, probation, parole, etc.)
- ☒ Judicial/legal (courts, prosecutorial/defendant programs, juries, probate, etc.)
- ☐ Fire protection services
- ☒ Natural resources (flood control, agriculture programs, wildlife programs, etc.)
- ☒ Parks and recreation (including beaches, zoos, cultural resources, etc.)
- ☒ Planning and development services
- ☐ Sewerage management
- ☒ Solid waste management
- ☒ Libraries

- ☐ Utility ownership and operation (*Please specify type:* \_\_\_\_\_)
- ☐ Liquor store management
- ☒ Other (*Please specify:* Managed Care Health Plans  
\_\_\_\_\_)
- ☒ Other (*Please specify:* 1) Recorder (document recording & voter registration);  
2) Elections; 3) Assessor (property assessments); 4) Treasurer (tax collection);  
5) Superintendent of Schools\_\_\_\_\_)
- ☒ Other (*Please specify:* 1) STAR Call Center; 2) Stadium District  
\_\_\_\_\_)

2. Following are five terms commonly used to describe forms of county government. Using the description and/or qualifying statements below, select the term that *best* describes your county's structure. Your county may use these terms or titles differently, however, please use the definitions provided in the descriptions and statements below and on page 3 when answering this question.

a. **Commission** ☐

*Description:* The elected legislative body (e.g. council, commission, board of supervisors) has legislative authority as well as executive/administrative authority. Some administrative responsibilities may be vested in independently elected officers, such as a county sheriff, treasurer, coroner, clerk, auditor, assessor, and/or prosecutor.

*Qualifying statements:* Your county has a "Commission" form of governance if ALL of the following statements are TRUE:

	TRUE	FALSE
Our county is lead by an elected legislative body (i.e. board, commission, council).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Our county does <u>not</u> have an administrative officer or assistant appointed by the legislative body to help carry out the body's responsibilities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Our county does <u>not</u> have a popularly elected executive or	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

administrative officer.		
Certain administrative responsibilities may be vested in independently elected officers (e.g. sheriff, clerk, assessor, etc.), but not necessarily.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

b. **Commission-Administrator: *County Manager*** ☒

*Description:* The elected legislative body appoints a county manager who performs executive functions (such as, appointing department heads, hiring staff, administering county programs, drafting budgets, and proposing ordinances). Of the three forms of “Commission-Administrator” governance, the county manager has the most extensive powers. Some administrative responsibilities may be vested in independently elected or legislative body appointed officers, such as a county sheriff, treasurer, coroner, clerk, auditor, assessor, and/or prosecutor.

*Qualifying statements:* Your county has a “Commission-Administrator: County Manager” form of governance if ALL of the following statements are TRUE:

	TRUE	FALSE
Our county has a county manager appointed by the legislative body.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Our county manager has executive powers (such as, appointing department heads, hiring staff, administering county programs, drafting budgets, and proposing ordinances).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Our county does <u>not</u> have a popularly elected executive or administrative officer.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Certain administrative responsibilities may be vested in independently elected officers (e.g. sheriff, clerk, assessor, etc.), but not necessarily.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



c. **Commission-Administrator: *Chief Administrative Officer*** ☐

*Description:* The elected legislative body (as the legislative and quasi-executive unit) appoints a chief administrative officer (CAO) to coordinate county departments, prepare budgets, draft ordinances, and oversee program implementation. The legislative body generally retains the power to appoint line department directors, but gives the CAO power to coordinate departments. The CAO has some, but not all the powers of the county manager (see above). Some administrative responsibilities may be vested in independently elected or board appointed officers, such as a county sheriff, treasurer, coroner, clerk, auditor, assessor, and/or prosecutor.

*Qualifying statements:* Your county has a “Commission-Administrator: Chief Administrative Officer” form of governance if ALL of the following statements are TRUE:

	TRUE	FALSE
Our county has a chief administrative officer appointed by the legislative body.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Our chief administrative officer has some, but not full, executive powers. Powers may include: coordinating county programs under the board’s direction, drafting budgets, and proposing ordinances. The chief administrative officer does not directly supervise most county departments and does not appoint most department directors.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Our county does <u>not</u> have a popularly elected executive or administrative officer.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Certain administrative responsibilities may be vested in independently elected or board appointed officers (e.g. sheriff, clerk, assessor, etc.), but not necessarily.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

d. **Commission-Administrator: County Administrative Assistant** ☐

*Description:* The elected legislative body (as the legislative and executive unit) appoints a county administrative assistant to help carry out the board's responsibilities. The powers of the county administrative assistant are similar to the chief administrative officer, but the administrative assistant has fewer executive powers. Some administrative responsibilities may be vested in independently elected or board appointed officers, such as a county sheriff, treasurer, coroner, clerk, auditor, assessor, and/or prosecutor.

*Qualifying statements:* Your county has a "Commission-Administrator: County Administrative Assistant" form of governance if ALL of the following statements are TRUE:

	TRUE	FALSE
Our county has a county administrative assistant appointed by the legislative body.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Our county administrative assistant has few executive powers. The county administrative assistant serves the legislative body by preparing drafts of ordinances, preparing budgets, and following up on administrative action from the board. The administrative assistant does not appoint or directly supervise department heads.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Our county does <u>not</u> have a popularly elected executive or administrative officer.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Certain administrative responsibilities may be vested in independently elected or board appointed officers (e.g. sheriff, clerk, assessor, etc.), but not necessarily.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

e. **Council-Executive** ☐

*Description:* A county executive is independently elected by the people to perform specific executive functions. The legislative body retains legislative authority, but the county executive may veto ordinances enacted by the commission (with the commission usually having two-thirds override power). The county executive has general responsibility for county administration and budget preparation. The county executive provides policy direction to the board, executes acts and resolutions of the board, and appoints and dismisses department heads (usually with board approval). Some administrative responsibilities may be vested in independently elected officers, such as a county sheriff, treasurer, coroner, clerk, auditor, assessor, and/or prosecutor.

*Qualifying statements:* Your county has a “Council-Executive” form of governance if ALL of the following statements are TRUE:

	TRUE	FALSE
Our county has a popularly elected county executive to lead the executive branch of government.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Our county executive has broad executive powers including: general county administration, budget preparation, appointment and dismissal of department heads, and veto power over the board.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Our county has an elected board which serves as the legislative branch of government.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Certain administrative responsibilities may be vested in independently elected officers (e.g. sheriff, clerk, assessor, etc.), but not necessarily.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

f. Please provide any explanatory comments regarding your county’s form of government.

3. Please tell us about so-called “row” officers in your county. Please check the offices that are found in your county. If two or more of the offices listed below are combined (e.g. treasurer and tax collector are same office), please state so in the space provided. Then select whether the office is elected or appointed and the degree of independence the office has from the commission and/or county administrator.

Office found in your county?		Office is combined with or same as...	Elected or Appointed?		Level of independence from board and/or county administrator?		
			Elected	Appointed	Independent	Semi-independent	Not independent
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Sheriff		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Coroner		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	County Clerk		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Court Clerk		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	County Recorder		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Auditor		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Registrar of Voters	Recorder	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Treasurer		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Tax Collector	Treasurer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Assessor		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Prosecuting Attorney		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Other: <u>Constables; and Justices of the Peace</u>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Other: <u>Superintendent of Schools</u>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Other: <u>Presiding Judge of the Superior Court</u> (NOTE: <u>Superior Court Judges are elected. From these elected judges, the Arizona Supreme Court appoints a Presiding Judge</u> )		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. How many serve on the legislative body? 5

5. How is the chairperson of the legislative body selected?

- ☒ By vote of the legislative body
- ☐ By direct vote of the public
- ☐ Appointed by the county executive
- ☐ Other (*Please specify:* \_\_\_\_\_)

6. Does your county have a home-rule charter?

☒ No ☐ Yes

If not, does your state allow the adoption of a home-rule charter?

☐ No ☒ Yes

7. What is the last day of your county's fiscal year? June 30th

8. When is your county's budget approved?

- ☒ Annually
- ☐ Biennially
- ☐ Other (*Please specify:* \_\_\_\_\_)

9. Is there anything else we should know about the government structure in your county?

Maricopa County is truly an exciting place to live and, as an organization, a challenging and dynamic place to work. In many respects, Maricopa County's circumstances are representative of those seen by county governments throughout the United States. Like most counties, over ninety percent of our functions are mandated by state government, and we face constantly increasing demands in the areas of law enforcement and health care. There are, however, some unusual twists to Maricopa County's story.

The biggest and most obvious challenge is that of explosive growth. Maricopa County ranks as either the first or second fastest growing county in the United States in terms of population increases. (Various surveys always seem to place either Maricopa County or Clark County, NV, in the first spot.) In 1900, Maricopa County had fewer than 25,000 residents. By the year 2000, however, we topped 3 million residents. What's more, most of this growth has occurred within the last thirty years -- and the end of this growth cycle is no where in sight. By the year 2040, we are expected to exceed 7 million residents. In a state of just over 5 million total residents, Maricopa County has 65% of the state's population and at the epicenter of Arizona's dynamic development.

While a blessing in many respects, keeping up with this growth has proved to be a substantial challenge to the creativity of Maricopa County government. Maricopa County's voters tend to be fiscally conservative. While certainly not unwelcome, this fact has forced Maricopa County's management to find innovative ways to meet the public's increasing demand for services without raising property taxes and expanding the "size of county government". In fact, Maricopa County's combined primary and secondary tax rate is lower today than a decade ago, and our county government employment base remains at roughly the same level of that in 1991. We are very proud of these accomplishments.

Examples of innovations that have contributed to these accomplishments include: our "STAR Call Center" which handles a massive volume of telephone calls from constituents seeking a variety of public services; a creative public/private partnership that has permitted our Animal Care & Control Services Department to place 18,000 cats and dogs annually in loving homes and significantly reduce the number of euthanized animals; a performance-based, outsourced, management approach to the operation of our health system; and innovative recruitment and total compensation programs within our Human Resources Department. Without these innovations, Maricopa County would not

have been able to maintain its low population-to-expense ratio over the past decade, while at the same time improving results in our customer satisfaction surveys.

Yet another “twist” is the unusual organizational structure of counties in Arizona. First, Arizona counties have a large number of “row” officers who are elected on a county-wide basis: Assessor, Recorder, Superintendent of Schools, County Attorney, Treasurer, Clerk of the Superior Court, and Sheriff. Each row officer maintains a level of policy-making authority commensurate to their status as independently elected, statutory officials. They do, however, look to the Board of Supervisors for budgetary and general administrative policy. They participate in county-managed employee merit systems, payroll and records services, recruitment programs, employee leave, compensation, and benefits plans, procurement systems, and equipment/facilities management. They coordinate at a high level with County administration on information technology strategies.

Secondly, the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors also serves as the statutory funding authority for several governmental entities over which they maintain limited management authority. For example, the Superior Court “in and for Maricopa County” is actually part of the Judicial Branch of the State of Arizona. The employees of the Superior Court (including its Juvenile and Adult Probation Divisions) are technically state employees, and serve under an independent merit system. However, because of the historical problem of funding the operations of the state’s superior court system across great distances, the Territorial Legislature (and later the State’s Legislature) mandated that county governments fund the operations of the superior courts. Despite the fact that the technology is now available to overcome these difficulties, this statutory scheme remains in place today. Other than budgetary controls, Maricopa County government has little authority to control the policy direction of the Superior Court. In spite of this, Maricopa County’s management team and that of the Superior Court have forged a sound working relationship over the past decade that has permitted a very high level of policy and strategic coordination. This has yielded positive results in case processing improvements, moving to high-technology courtrooms, and into integrated information management systems.

Finally, the Board of Supervisors also serves as the statutory “board of directors” for three separate special taxing districts: a Flood Control District; a Library District; and a Stadium District. While legally distinct political subdivisions of the state, their Board of Directors has required that the directors of each district report for administrative purposes through the County Manager. This system ensures a high level of policy and strategic coordination between the Districts and the County’s Administration, and takes advantage of the inherent economies of scale.

Given this unusual organizational structure, Maricopa County, over the past decade, has developed a unique approach to managing county government. In order to avoid treating the “appointed departments” in a dramatically different manner from those of the Superior Court, Elected Officials, and Districts, Maricopa County has developed policies which generally delegate a significant amount of management discretion to each department’s management team. A prime example of this is use of a modified “lump

sum appropriation” budgeting approach which gives departments a great amount of latitude to control the use of their budgets throughout the fiscal year within the discrete categories of personnel, operations, and capital expenses. Similarly, Maricopa County’s innovative application of a hybrid “broadband” compensation system affords departments greater control over their compensation budgets and greater employee accountability through performance-based compensation strategies -- all while still ensuring that raises given in one fiscal year do not create a future fiscal impact that the County cannot afford.

In order to ensure that this greater level of discretion is not abused, Maricopa County has implemented a budget-driven “Managing for Results” initiative. As a result of these changes, Maricopa County’s operations today look more like those of a parent corporation with forty-five subsidiaries than that of a traditional command-and-control governmental authority. This structure is, without question, one that represents a significant challenge to operate. It is also, however, the structure that permits us to be flexible, creative, and capable of quickly addressing the changing and increasing demands of explosive population growth without dramatically increasing property taxes.



*Thank you for your valuable assistance in providing this information.*

**Please provide the names, contact telephone numbers, and email addresses for those who completed this section of the survey:**

Name: David R. Smith Job Title: County  
Administrative Officer  
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